

213298



Zia Eftekhari
President

February 14, 2005

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A Genlyte Company

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Reference STB Ex Parte No. 656

Dear Mr. Williams:

Lightolier is a lighting manufacturer with twelve manufacturing and warehousing facilities throughout the United States. One of our largest expense items in our business is for freight costs. Freight costs over the last few years have been escalating and is becoming a detriment to our overall competitive environment.

We understand the Surface Transportation Board is evaluating the appropriateness of extending continued antitrust exemption for the National Classification Committee. We urge you to deny the continuance of this collective agreement.

We believe it inappropriate to continue the collective agreement activity of the National Classification Committee in today's deregulated economy. Freight costs should only be determined in the open market with agreements/contracts determined between individual shippers and truckers.

If there is some overriding reason why the NCC should continue, then it should be reorganized with its makeup 50% shippers and 50% truckers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zia Eftekhari", with a long, sweeping underline.

Zia Eftekhari